The Parthenon
Pre-Visit Materials for Pre-K-3
DeeGee Lester, Education Director

The Greek Culture Lesson Plan and
The Parthenon and Greek Culture Lesson Plan
Written by
Katherine Campbell
Belmont University Practicum, 2007

The Parthenon offers our youngest visitors an opportunity to establish a life-long learning relationship with this unique Nashville structure by presenting a complex architecture and culture in its basic form. The children are introduced to the Parthenon as a giant story book in which each decorative element tells a story – stories of triumph over impossible odds, stories of challenges met and lessons learned. The building becomes more than just a storybook as students explore issues such as museum etiquette and skill development through observation and recognition (size, perspective, shapes, and pattern).

This program establishes the foundation for learning upon which students can build as they continue through elementary, middle, and high school and make connections between the Parthenon and social studies, math and science, mythology, Greek comedies and tragedies, the epic poems, the Romantic poets, and the visual arts. Each level of knowledge builds upon the others so that, as they graduate, each student feels a connection with the Parthenon and recognizes its impact on their educational experience. As Pre-K -3 teachers, you assist the Parthenon's educational mission in the introduction of this unique structure and of Nashville's place as the "*Athens of the South.*"

DeeGee Lester

<u>Pre-K</u> Lesson Plan 1: Pre-visit preparation

By Katherine Campbell

Topic: Greek Culture

Subjects Integrated: Early Literacy and Creative Arts

Goal/s: (Head Start Performance Standards)
1304.21(c)(1)(ii) / 1304.21(a)(4)(ii) - To introduce young students to Greek culture

Objectives:
As a result of this lesson, Pre-K students will:

- Recognize the Parthenon and Athena
- Understand features of the Parthenon such as size, columns, purpose
- Understand that Greeks told stories about their heroes through architecture as well as paintings on everyday items such as pottery

Materials:
Books:

Pearson, Anne (2007). *Eyewitness Books: Ancient Greece*. London: DK Publishing.

D'Aulaires, Ingri & D'Aulaires, Edgar Parin. *Book of Greek Myths*. New York: Delacorte

Other materials:

- Globe
- Building Center: blocks, cylinders, various shapes, 11" X 14" sheets of poster board or cardboard.
- Drama Center: white towels or material and gold rope
- Art Center: Heavy-duty paper plates (Chinet), markers, crayons

- Modeling clay such as play dough (great recipes online)
- Snack: pita bread, hummus, and grape juice

Instruction:
Ask a student to help you locate Greece on the globe.

Look at photographs in *Eyewitness* text and describe life in Greece 2,500 years ago.

Describe things that were important to the Greeks, such as stories about their heroes (relate stories the students are familiar with), learning, games (Olympic and board games), foods they liked, how they dressed, etc.

Give each student a cylinder (paper towel tubes are great) – As you describe the Parthenon, have students place cylinders on pre-marked areas on a rectangular sheet of poster board or cardboard. Add another sheet as the roof and embellish with triangles. Explain that the ruins of the original Parthenon are in Greece, but Nashville is the only city in the world that has an exact replica.

Read about Athena in the *Book of Greek Myths* (page 34 in *D'Aulaires' Book of Greek Myths*).

Students will go to centers:

- Blocks/manipulatives – create their own Parthenon
- Modeling clay such as play dough – create pottery
- Drama – dress up in "chitons" (page 42 in *Eyewitness* text)
- Art – have students create "story" on paper plate with crayons and markers to simulate pottery

Additional suggestions:
If time allows after your visit to the Parthenon, organize Olympic games for the students to play while at Centennial Park. Students can receive a "victor's crown" to simulate the original laurel wreaths. The wreaths can be made of artificial greenery.

Reading:

Yolen, Jane (1998). *Pegasus, the Flying Horse*. New York: Penquin Putnam.

Note…Beautiful illustrations but lengthy text.

Russell, William F. (1998). *Classic Myths to Read Aloud*. New York: Crown.

Note…stories are categorized by listening level beginning at age five, but no illustrations.

<u>Kindergarten</u> Lesson Plan 1:

By Katherine Campbell

Topic: The Parthenon and Greek Culture

Subjects Integrated:
Reading, Math, Geography

Goal:
Introduce Kindergarten students to Greek culture and the Parthenon

Objectives: (Tennessee State Standards)
K.1.02 - Listen attentively to speaker for specific information.
K.1.07 – Develop and extend reading vocabulary.
K.1.1 –Understand numbers, ways of representing numbers, relationships among numbers, and number systems
K.3.1 – Analyze characteristics & properties of geometric shapes
K.3.1.e – create structures using three-dimensional shapes

Materials:
- Pearson, Anne (2007). *Eyewitness Books: Ancient Greece*. London: DK Publishing.
- Globe
- Building Center: blocks, cylinders, various shapes, 11” X 14” sheets of poster board or cardboard.
- Chutes and Ladders

Instruction:
Look at photographs in *Eyewitness* text and describe life in Greece 2,500 years ago. Have a student help you find Greece on the globe.

Ask the students what kinds of games they like to play, what kinds of stories they like to hear and tell, foods they like to eat, and games they like to play.

Describe things that were important to the Greeks such as stories about their heroes (relate stories the students are familiar with now), learning, games (Olympic and board games, such as Chutes & Ladders but Greeks called it Snakes & Ladders), foods they liked, how they dressed, etc.

Give each student a cylinder (paper towel tubes are great) – As you describe the Parthenon, have students place cylinders on pre-marked areas on a rectangular a sheet of poster board or cardboard. Add another sheet as the roof and embellish with triangles. Explain that the ruins of the original Parthenon are in Greece, but Nashville is the only city in the world that has an exact replica.

Centers:

- Blocks, shapes, and manipulatives: Have the students create their own Parthenon and identify the shapes used.
- Games: Set up Chutes and Ladders. The Greeks played a similar game known as Snakes and Ladders.

<u>Kindergarten</u> Lesson Plan 2: Parthenon pre-visit lesson plan:

By Katherine Campbell

Topic: Greek mythology

Subjects Integrated:
Reading, Writing, Geography

Goal:
Introduce Kindergarten students to Greek mythology

Objectives: (Tennessee State Standards)
K.1.02 – Develop listening skills
K.1.07.a – Build vocabulary by listening to literature and participating in discussions.
K.2.10.c – Create a drawing, picture, sign, or other graphic symbols in response to literature.

Materials:

- Pearson, Anne (2007). *Eyewitness Books: Ancient Greece*. London: DK Publishing.
- D'Aulaires, Ingri & D'Aulaires, Edgar Parin. (1962). *D'Aulaires' Book of Greek Myths*. New York: Delacorte.
- Globe
- Drawing paper, heavy-duty paper plates (Chinet), pencils, markers, crayons

Instruction:
Prior to reading about Athena in the *Book of Greek Myths*:

- Discuss the difference between real and not real. Explain that we have stories today that are know as "Greek Myths" and give them examples of "myths" they are familiar with.
- Ask the students to give you examples of big and small animals.
- Talk about friendship (Nike was Athena's constant companion), and also address the issue of friends who hurt one another's feelings.
- Ask them what it means to have "wisdom" or to be smart. Is being smart just knowing how to add, subtract, or read, or can it also mean being aware of others' feelings?
- Explain that many things or words we use today are from Greek culture such as the Olympics and language (words):
    - In the story about Athena, Arachne is a student who was very good at weaving. Today, spiders are also known as arachnids, and ask the students what do spiders weave.
    - If they are familiar with name brands, tell them the running shoe company, Nike, took its name from Greek mythology. Nike, the spirit of victory, is Athena's companion, and the students will see her in Athena's hand at the Parthenon.

After reading, have the students create a picture on paper or on a paper plate (to resemble pottery) that tells a story.

Additional suggestions:

If time allows after your visit to the Parthenon, organize Olympic games for the students to play while at Centennial Park. Students can receive a "victor's crown" just as the original Olympians. The crowns can be made from artificial greenery.

Greek mythology is a great way to create a lesson plan focusing on theater or drama. Music could be incorporated through a "Greek chorus."

Reading:

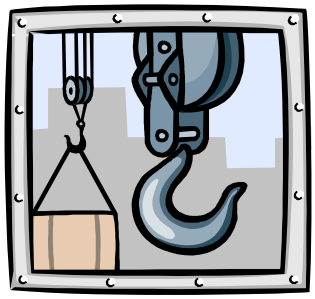
Yolen, Jane (1998). *Pegasus, the Flying Horse*. New York: Penquin Putnam.

Note…Beautiful illustrations but lengthy text.

Russell, William F. (1998). *Classic Myths to Read Aloud*. New York: Crown.

Note…stories are categorized by listening level beginning at age five, but no illustrations.

Lesson 3:



Topic: Simple Machines

Subjects Integrated: Greek History and Science

Goal:
The learner will understand that the Ancient Greeks developed a very advanced civilization that continues to influence our lives in many ways.

Objectives:
TN. Science Standards: Theme 1.1 (Observing Objects) and Theme 2.1 (Scale Models).

As a result of this lesson, the learner will:

- Be able to identify six simple machines
- Know how simple machines can lessen the effort needed to do a job.
- Know how simple machines work.
- Know how simple machines helped to build the Parthenon.
- Partner with a classmate and research the Internet to choose a simple machine to make.
- Create a project notebook.

Materials Needed:

Drawing paper
Markers, pencils, or crayolas
An alternative is to have samples of each tool and have students identify each and demonstrate its use.

Activities: (Incorporating math, science, history, art, and architecture)

1. *Defining and identifying simple machines*
   A *simple machine* is a tool with few or no moving parts. Simple machines date back to antiquity and were used in everyday tasks and in the construction of buildings, monuments, and even irrigation systems. The pyramids, the Parthenon, and the Roman aqueducts are all the products of simple machines. The simplicity of these machines and the common need for tools that would be easy to make and handle, means that even remote societies invented and used similar objects.

Identify six simple machines:

Lever: A lever is a simple machine consisting of a rigid body such as a board or metal bar resting on a turning point called a *fulcrum.* The weight to be moved or lifted is called a *load.* **Ask students to draw an example of a lever in action (such as a board lifting a large rock, a hammer pulling a nail from a board, or two children playing on a seesaw**). In each picture students should identify the lever (L), the fulcrum (F), and the load or weight (W).

Inclined Plane: An inclined plane is a flat surface that is higher on one end to ease the effort in moving a load from one level to another. **Ask students to draw an example of an inclined plane (a ramp, a slide, or a slanted road).** In each picture students should identify the inclined plane (I) and the load or weight (W). An inclined plane can be used to move objects up to a higher level or down to a lower level. Which direction is easier?

Wedge: A wedge is made up of two inclined planes that meet and form a sharp edge. The wedge is used to split two objects apart when pressure or force is applied. **Ask students to draw an example of a wedge (a knife, fork, nail or ax).** In their drawings children should show how applied force (F) to the wedge (W) splits the object (O).

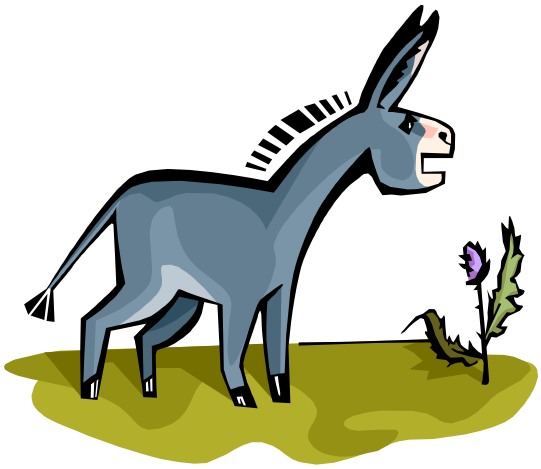
Screw: A screw is also made from an inclined plane, but this time the inclined plane winds around itself. A screw can hold objects together or be used to raise or lower solids or liquids such as water from one level to another. **Ask students to draw an example of a screw (a jar lid, light bulb, or a car jack).**

Wheel and Axle: An axle is a rod that goes through a wheel allowing it to turn more easily. This simple machine allows us to roll things from place to place. **Ask students to draw a picture of a wheel and axle (a car, roller skates, or door knob).**

Pulley: A pulley combines a wheel and a rope to create a simple machine capable of lifting a heavy load. The rope fits into a groove in the wheel with one end of the rope attached to the load. When you pull the other end of the rope, the load is lifted. **Ask children to draw an example of a pulley (the mechanism that hoists the flag on a flag pole, a construction crane or the apparatus that raises window blinds).**

2. *Associating simple machines with construction of the ancient Parthenon.* **Remember that the Parthenon was built 438 years before the birth of Jesus and constructed on top of the Acropolis, the highest point in Athens, rising approximately 200 feet above the city. The Greeks quarried marble from Mount Pentelicon and transported the marble approximately ten miles to the Acropolis.** Ask students to look over the list of simple machines (lever, inclined plane, wedge, screw, wheel & axle, and pulley) and determine which machines would be used to construct the ancient temple and how those machines were used in cutting, transporting, and lifting the marble.

2. *Associating builders with heroes.* **Children usually think of heroes as famous people performing extraordinary achievements. But heroes can also be found among seemingly ordinary people. Even animals have been known to rise to the level of hero as the following simple story explains.**



Milos the Mule

The ancient builders of the Parthenon cut marble from Mt. Pentelicon and transported the marble by ox cart to the base of the Acropolis. Mule teams then transported the marble up the steep incline to the top of the Acropolis. This is a tale about a mule who became a folk hero to the ancient children of Athens

Milos the mule was tired but happy. Every day for many weeks he pulled big wagons loaded with heavy marble slabs up the steep hill. The work was slow and strenuous. He began work each morning at dawn and worked all day in the hot sun and the pouring rain. Working in a team with other mules and a pulley system, Milos hauled the marble up the hill. Depending upon the size of the block of marble, the task could take up to an hour to complete. The big hill was called the Acropolis and it was located in Athens, Greece.

"Why are you so happy?" an older mule asked Milos as he returned, grinning from ear to ear from another haul.

"I'm happy because I am helping to build a beautiful temple," Milos replied. "And I am happy because I'm helping to build something that will last thousands of years."

"So?" the old mule grumbled.

"So, throughout time, whenever anyone looks up at the Parthenon, they will see more than the marble of the temple. They will see the work, sweat and joy of Milos the Mule."

"Hey, I never thought of it that way," the old mule said.

At the end of each mule's weeks of service, he was released to graze wherever he wanted. When it was Milos' turn to be released, he joined the other mules scampering across the valley, nibbling at the grass. But as he gazed back at the Acropolis, he thought of the grumbling mules. "All they need is encouragement," Milos thought. "So that they will know that what they are doing is important."

Milos knew what he had to do. He left the green valley and returned to the Acropolis. Day after day, until the Parthenon was complete, he climbed the steep hill to run alongside the other mules as they pulled their heavy loads, and he encouraged them every step of the way.

Ask children:

- What makes Milos a hero?
- What qualities in Milos set him apart from the other mules?
- Why is supporting others important to any task?
- What made Milos a great team member?

As we look at the beautiful structures around our city, think of the heroes who labored as workers, as teammates, to give the city these wonderful gifts.